

Citizens Advisory Committee on Transportation/  
City Interdisciplinary Transportation Team Meeting  
Wednesday, January 11, 2006 Meeting Minutes

**Members present:**

Charles Langalis, Judy Fraser  
James Michel (PSC liaison)

**City Staff Present:**

Wendy Block Sanford, Harry Reitze, Tim Geis

**Agenda:**

1. Development Update
2. Arlington County Speaker – Charlie Denney
3. Review of Traffic Calming Petition
4. Review of Special Exception TIA for Read Building
5. Pedestrian Plan
6. Other Items
7. Meeting Minutes Approval: December 14, 2005

**Minutes:**

*1. Development Update:*

Wendy Block Sanford provided an update on current building projects and recent submittals to the planning office. The Council held a first hearing on the Read SE and referred it to boards and commissions for comments. Staff just received a revised submittal of the Pearson SE and will begin reviewing it. Staff also reviewing a rezoning application for 110 Great Falls Street.

*2. Arlington County Speaker – Charlie Denney, Bicycle/Pedestrian Program Manager*

Charlie gave a brief history of Arlington County's bike/ped program. In the mid-1990s, there was an increased interest in pedestrian issues. In 1997, the County adopted a pedestrian plan with specific goals for pedestrian safety. The plan also included design guidelines for how and where to build sidewalks. The policy stated that there should be one sidewalk on each residential street and on both sides of arterial streets. Today, approximately 75% of residential streets in the County have a sidewalk on one side.

The County does a good job of achieving pedestrian goals when there's new development. However, in older neighborhoods they need a better system to fill in the gaps, especially when it comes to ADA compliance.

In 2001, the Walk Arlington program was established. As part of this initiative, the goal was to make sure all streets are walkable – they do not want to get people off of the main streets. All pedestrian programs in Arlington are grouped into the Walk Arlington program – it incorporates public health, safety, transportation, crosswalk enforcement, etc. [www.walkarlington.com](http://www.walkarlington.com)

The County receives a lot of support from the County Board - \$1M in 2005 in CIP for pedestrian improvements. At first, that amount was \$500,000/year, but that amount has now been increased. County works with an advisory committee to prioritize projects. They also have the Neighborhood Conservation Program, which has a \$9M budget. These projects must have 60% approval of the neighborhood. These projects are citizen initiated and the project must be stated in the neighborhood plan. There are 45 neighborhood plans in the County.

Recently, there has been a renewed focus on urban design. One area they have focused on is Ballston, where they changed the streetlights, added curb nubs, improved the overall look of the environment, and made street elements consistent. In the Courthouse area, they have noticed a change in behavior with the new, bold, crosswalks in the area. They looked at signal timing to ensure that people have enough time to cross the street and introduced countdown signals to help pedestrians.

Last year, the County constructed 25 pedestrian improvement projects. They use the following criteria to evaluate pedestrian requests:

- Existing conditions
- Proximity to metro
- Proximity to school
- Area identified as a speeding problem
- Population density
- Citizen support – they do not seek formal support of a certain percentage, but in general if a lot of people are opposed to the project, they do not pursue it.

The County does not have a formal snow removal policy – they feel that they cannot ask people to comply with a policy that the county itself does not comply with on its own properties.

Chris Hamilton is in charge of the Commuter Store in Rosslyn – we can contact him if we would like to put our GEORGE schedules there.

### *3. Review of Traffic Calming Petition*

The CACT reviewed the petition received from neighbors on North Cherry Street. However, staff has not received the questionnaire from the applicant, which is required in order for the CACT to formally proceed with this case. Staff has e-mailed the questionnaire to the applicant but has not received it back. The CACT is willing to proceed with this case, but needs the completed questionnaire first.

### *4. Review of Special Exception Traffic Impact Analysis for Read Building*

The CACT had the following comments on the Read SE, which were sent in a separate document to the Planning Department for inclusion in the final staff report to the City Council.

The Citizens Advisory Committee on Transportation (CACT) considered Special Exception SE 05-0182, The Read Building, during its meeting on January 11, 2006. Overall, the CACT favors approval of the Special Exception, subject to additional terms and conditions as may materialize. Toward that end, the CACT offers Council the following observations and ideas.

1. The committee has a general concern that there is not enough parking provided on-site given the potential high parking demand from the health club patrons and users of the ATM, who should be considered separate from drive-through users or bank lobby users. In order to ensure adequate parking for residents and employees of the bank and the spa, parking for residents and employees should be dedicated and enforced.
2. The City should encourage shared parking amongst nearby developments – the “park once” concept. However, if the developer contracts with a tow company, there are concerns that cars will be towed if someone parks in this lot yet runs an errand across the street, for instance. The details of the parking on the premises should be settled before any use and occupancy permits are issued. If appropriate, the developer should be required to present a concrete plan for how on-site parking will be assigned and regulated. The CACT advocates that City negotiators go as far as they feasibly and legally can toward eliminating or minimizing future on-site parking conflicts and other difficulties.
3. The City and developer should encourage GEORGE/Metro bus use. It is nice to see that ten annual GEORGE passes will be provided to residents. In addition, the developer should encourage the health club users to ride GEORGE or Metro as well.
4. This project presents another opportunity for measures to encourage citizens’ greater use of public transportation – GEORGE, Metrobus, and Metrorail – to commute and move about in the City of Falls Church. With the completion of this project and the Spectrum, the segment of West Broad between Little Falls Street and Oak Street will feature a most significant high-density resident and workdays population – townhouses, rental garden apartments, condominiums, transient accommodations, office buildings, retail and services storefronts, restaurants. It will be because in its totality the most mixed-use part of the City. There are four bus stops located between South Virginia Avenue and South Oak Street. The City does not need that many stops on such a short stretch of the roadway. The City should consider consolidating some of the bus stops. The CACT envisions three sheltered busstops in each direction between Oak and Virginia:
  - a. Eastbound: South Oak, The Byron/Rees Place/ South Virginia
  - b. Westbound: North Virginia, Spectrum, North OakThese locations will provide easy, equitable access to buses for resident and nonresident commuters and to others opting for bus transportation. Holding the number of bus stops to three in each directions helps to hold the line on (a) air and noise pollution and (b) impede of traffic flows.
5. With the installation of the traffic light at Pennsylvania and Broad, there will be seven traffic lights between Washington Street and Lee Street (including those streets). While the signals may be optimized for a rhythmic traffic flow, the factoring in of unsignalized left-turn intersections and in/out accesses presents an important additional dynamic.

Whereas the signalized intersections at Washington and Maple have dedicated left-turn lanes, none of the other five signalized intersections in question has dedicated left turn lanes. In the Washington-to-Lee segment of Broad, there are 18 in/out aprons on the eastbound lane and nine on the westbound. The addition of in/out aprons for The Byron, The Spectrum, and The Read Building will raise the eastbound total to 19 and westbound to 11. Notwithstanding the technically determined, generally acceptable analytical findings of the traffic impact study, the odds for day-to-day clogging of the traffic flow can only increase when the developments are in operation. The aggregate of mixed uses flanking Broad Street between Little Falls and Lee Streets poses the potential for a critical mass exerting severe stresses on the traffic flow.

6. The committee is pleased to see the provision of bicycle storage for residents' bicycles. At-grade bicycle racks should also be included for visitors.
7. Visibility out of the development seems limited due to the presence of the low stone wall. The developer should ensure that the wall does not impair visibility for vehicles exiting the site and cause them to block the sidewalk while trying to exit.
8. The committee supports the Traffic Impact Analysis recommendation to allow right turns only out of the development.
9. In the interest of encouraging multi-modal transportation, the City should improve the North Virginia/Park Avenue intersection. It is currently a difficult intersection to navigate due the high volume of both vehicles and pedestrians. Having a sidewalk on the north side of Park Avenue, west of the three-way intersection, would improve the situation.

#### 5. *Pedestrian Plan*

The committee will continue to work on edits and additions to the draft via email over the next month. Judy stated that she will incorporate changes from Charles. The focus is on the action items. The goal is to have something to present to the Council in two months.

#### 6. *Other Items*

Wendy and Charles went to the Tim Kaine town hall meeting on Tuesday, Jan 3, 2006

Tim Geis updated the committee on four transportation improvements that are occurring in the City:

- Park Avenue / Pennsylvania Avenue four way stop
- Stop signs being installed at Ridge/ Roosevelt intersection
- S. Lee Street – “No parking here to corner” signs are being moved further down the street
- Allowed parking on Little Falls Street near Park Avenue

James Michel is the CACT's new liaison from the Public Safety Commission

*The City of Falls Church is committed to the letter and spirit of the Americans with Disabilities Act. This document will be made available in alternate format upon request.*

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